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## Introduction

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Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej [bazhum.muzhp.pl](http://bazhum.muzhp.pl), gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

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## INTRODUCTION / AVANT-PROPOS

The previous volume of *TransCanadiana* has shown that Canada occupies an influential position in the global arena, shaping its international renown of *soft power*, and so while working towards its internal political, economic, social, and cultural stability and progress:

Its positive image and fine international reputation in the world has been built by sticking to the rules of international law, membership in international organizations and commitment to international development agendas. Ottawa has a strong record of peacekeeping, promotion of human rights, multilateralism, and dispute resolution. Canada has also been the foremost promoter of minority rights and gender equality and the first country in the world to proclaim multiculturalism as the state's official policy. Still leading in multiculturalism policy indexes, Canada attracts a large number of immigrants every year. (Gabryś and Soroka 7-8)

Yet, as the editors of *Canadian Soft Power: Dimensions of Canada's Influence on the Outside World / Pouvoir de contraindre et pouvoir de convaincre canadiens : de l'influence du Canada à travers le monde* have also rightly pointed out, "There is, however, a darker side of Canada's international image" (8). Indeed, Canada's path to its positive profile worldwide has been quite winding, resting on the largely unacknowledged systemic dispossession of Indigenous populations, and being marked in its history by conflict and struggle against political enforcement, racial and ethnic prejudice, social injustice, economic inequality, and the destruction of the ecosystem.

This fact is also recognized by J. Keri Cronin and Kirsty Robertson who, in their collection of essays *Imagining Resistance: Visual Culture and Activism in Canada*, comment upon such a conflicting image of this country in the following way:

The depiction (both internal and external) of Canada as a peace-loving and peace-keeping nation contrasts strongly with events past and present. . . . [which] counter any deeply held myth of a peaceful nation. Rather, the prevalence of such actions suggests that these instances are not anomalies but are instead indications of a deep commitment to the politics of control concomitant with the spread of the disciplinary tactics of neoliberalism. (2)

Yet, as they succinctly conclude, “Resistance is equally present” (2). Focusing on “the role of the oppositional visual culture” in theory and practice (2), Cronin and Robertson’s collection explores thus various artistic modes of expressing opposition, including “the spectacle of public protest . . . [as well as] local grassroots involvement in the picturing and politics of dissent . . .” (1).

Sharing interest in the subject of resistance in Canada and holding a convergent view on its nature, we believe that particular attention should be given to the latter aspect as, conferring both the history and present circumstances of civil opposition in Canada, it is apparent that disagreement with political, social, cultural, and/or economic inhibition has been continuously taking place in this country from the bottom up, so that grassroots movements have become a crucial dimension of Canadian resistance. It is thus from this perspective that we decided to open up a discussion about Canadian sites of collective resistance and devote the eighth issue of *TransCanadiana* to its exploration throughout history and across various levels of social life, hoping that valid conclusions about its potential for or failure at effecting change can be reached. Consequently, with this volume, we have aimed at examining the reasons and consequences, as well as forms and substance of different instances of group protest and defiance that have been taking place not only within Canada but also beyond its borders to see if, how, and to what extent Canada voices and enacts its solidarity against any forms of persecution, subjugation, or marginalization in local *and* global terms.

The urgency of examining Canada, or any other country for that matter, in its internal and international context is of course nothing new in scholarship, being a prerequisite for any careful deliberation or comprehensive study. But it is the ever-changing context of the contemporary world that makes any such analysis new, or at least demands for exploring the topic anew. Admitting that the exploration of the global tends even to obscure the discussion of the nation state (2), Cronin and Robertson indicate, however, (as in the case of their volume):

the ongoing importance of the nation state as an epistemic framework of organization while also recognizing the impossibility (and indeed ill-advisedness) of focusing on a single-national entity in a world in which the global seems to predominate. As has been repeatedly pointed out, globalization erases some borders even as it creates others. . . . Although borders dissolve for the circulation

of goods . . . , they are strengthened against the passage of people—particularly those without official documentation. Thus, the nation-state, open to some, closed to others, remains a significant category for investigation, particularly in Canada, where, in the early 1990s, a perceived crisis of national identity overshadowed the growing importance of the global. (2-3)

The degree of attention given to each aspect notwithstanding, their mutual relationship is undeniable, as Cronin and Robertson also observe. And so, while their words remain in particular reference to Canada, they strike with immediate relevance to the alarming present situation in Europe, as well as the whole world.

Faced with contemporary global and local unrest—wars, military interventions, terrorist threats and attacks, economic crises, political and social oppression, as well as environmental destruction—“a grave responsibility” (Lorde 341) of reacting and taking a stand falls on all of us. Yet the possibility of any change to a given *status quo* hinges not only on a standpoint one takes but, most importantly, on the actions that one performs, and these, as history shows, are rarely successful without group solidarity and mutual commitment to the struggle for a common cause. The capacity to resist dehumanization and oppression and to act in solidarity against these remain defining and fundamental human qualities.

Audre Lorde wrote about these qualities when she defined “this . . . grave responsibility, projected from within each of us, not to settle for the convenient, the shoddy, the conventionally expected, nor the merely safe” (341). This responsibility “to give up, of necessity, being satisfied with suffering and self-negation, and with the numbness which so often seems like their only alternative in our society” (Lorde 342) is also a great ability to take up courage that not everyone possesses, especially when it requires one’s “affiliation with an extremely unpopular cause” (Said in Barsamian ix), and, at the same time, it is also expressive of one’s inability—“to live an uncommitted or suspended life” (x). The eighth issue of *TransCanadiana* includes essays which address such a sense of responsibility and which show that being responsive to it goes hand in hand with acting upon it.

The idea for the theme of the volume was inspired by writer, artist, scholar, and activist Marusya Bociurkiw, whose works exemplify perfectly what the words above mean. Working on Bociurkiw’s multigeneric oeuvre during my fellowship at the Alfried Krupp Wissenschaftskolleg Greifswald in 2014-2015, I (Weronika Suchacka) have realized again how crucial involvement, like Bociurkiw’s, in addressing most pressing issues in Canada and globally is and how the presence of such oppositional voices is much called for in the face of current political affairs. What is more, Bociurkiw’s way of expressing discontent with and dissent from unjust policies and

restraining power structures (whatever frame of reference they concern) by combining literature, art, and politics, so that the outcome of this practice can be defined as nothing less than work of “creative resistance” (qtd. in film synopsis), has stimulated an idea to investigate other modes and sites of resistance in Canada, past and present.<sup>1</sup>

Having decided about the subject of the new volume of *TransCanadiana*, the choice of the co-editor was clear to me: Professor emeritus Hartmut Lutz has continuously expressed his opposition to any form of oppression and his solidarity with the oppressed and marginalized. Lacking sufficient competence in the French language ourselves, we were happy to win our colleague, Dr Anna Kricka from the Institute of Romance Studies at the University of Szczecin, for our team of local editors. We hope that the international composition of our editorial team and our mutual work on the volume will testify to the necessity of international cooperation, and we would like to see this volume as a tangible evidence that this cooperation is ongoing, and as yet another documentation of how strongly it is supported by the Polish Association for Canadian Studies (PACS).

The international input into this project is therefore also reflected in the participation of a group of Polish, German, Italian, and Canadian academics in the reviewing process—their work and commitment made this volume possible, for which we remain most grateful—but also in the participation of the international contributors to this volume, as our call for papers attracted the attention of scholars from Poland, Germany, and Canada, who are working within various academic fields and so present different, insightful perspectives on what resistance in Canada means. Consequently, *Canadian Sites of Resistance* includes multiple understandings of and approaches to the topic; among them, you may find contributions which talk about resistance lived or experienced but also those which discuss historic/al, cultural, literary, artistic, political, and activist representations subverting traditional genres, established conventions, common stereotypes, and constraining structures of enforcement or control—all of them, however, testify with their messages to the possibility of resistance beyond the written word.

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<sup>1</sup> For incisive comments about “the political role of contemporary art” (9), which, in my view, Bociurkiw’s work can be an example of, see also Cronin and Roberston’s introduction (e.g., 9-11), in which they talk about present inflections of “activism through art” (11), a legacy of previous artistic standards aiming at “bring[ing] together action and art” (10). See, for example, their reference to Jordan’s statements about focusing on the potential of art away “from the gallery [and] to the streets, where every protester is an artist, every protest an art work, with the very invisibility of artists ‘singling it out as a historical point in the current of creative resistance . . .’” (9-10).

The contributions have been grouped around four main “sites of resistance,” the analysis of which connects thematically the essays in each section. Given the postcolonial situation of Canada, in which internal colonialism still prevails with regards to the Aboriginal populations, it is meet that a thematic issue on “resistance” begins with a larger section on Indigenous politics and cultures. So we proudly start this volume with original poetry by **Jeannette Armstrong**. The Okanagan author, UNESCO councillor, scholar, and environmental activist donated her “Three line poems” specifically for our topic of resistance, and if you read her text, you will understand why and where the poet draws her line between the forces which support life and all well-being on earth, and those which continue to threaten these: an irresponsible and profiteering frontier mentality, greed and corruption, substance abuse, war mongering, social exclusion, and environmental pollution. These are evils, which reoccur like leitmotifs in other contributions in this volume. Armstrong’s original poem is also accompanied here by its translation provided by **Kaja Gucio**. This rendition of Armstrong’s piece, translated with precision and poetic sensitivity, is, to our knowledge, the first published translation of Jeannette Armstrong’s poetry into Polish, and we are proud that this historic publication has taken place within this project, and we sincerely hope that it will inspire further translation of Armstrong’s works.

## MÉTIS RESISTANCE

The Métis are Canada’s least well-known Indigenous founding nation. Their appearance in historiography began in 1816 with a defiant act of resistance, the so-called “Battle” (or “Massacre,” depending on the writer’s [post-]colonial politics) of “Seven Oaks,” and resistance has been an overriding paradigm in Métis history as a distinct nation until the present. We are happy to be able to include two substantial papers on Métis resistance. Since the publication of his habilitation on history and myth in Canadian Literature in 1989, Governor General Award winner **Wolfgang Klooss** is recognized as an international specialist on the historiography and reception of Métis resistance in Canadian Letters. He brings this expertise to bear on his contribution “From Seven Oaks to Batoche: Métis Resistance in History and Narrative,” where he traces the development of Métis nation building during the formative nineteenth century. The Métis became a “Forgotten People” throughout most of the twentieth century, until the 1970s, when political activists like Howard Adams and Harry Daniels led a renewed Métis resistance as part of the Red Power movement in North America. This is where **Ursula Lehmkuhl**’s paper “Paradoxes of Resistance and Resilience: The Pitfalls of Métis Renaissance since the 1970s” sets in. Basing her study on a paradigmatic Supreme Court

decision, the former president of the Association for Canadian Studies in German-Speaking Countries (GKS) and historian Ursula Lehmkuhl reads Métis resilience against the theories of Bourdieu and Foucault. Her paper touches upon the still prevalent core ethics of British colonial relations with North America's Indigenous, "the Honour of the Crown," as a post-liberal normative political instrument demanding a full recognition of the Métis as an Aboriginal nation whose land-rights and cultural self-determination were guaranteed by the British Crown and must be upheld by the Canadian government today.

The historical aspects of Métis resistance that the two essays by Klooss and Lehmkuhl discuss are the subject matter of another, this time literary, piece that we are proud to present here, namely the excerpts from *The Seven Oaks Reader* (NeWest Press, 2016) written by **Myrna Kostash**, acclaimed Canadian writer and icon of Canadian creative non-fiction writing. *The Seven Oaks Reader* includes multiple voices that recall the memory of the Battle of Seven Oaks, which constitutes the historic turning point in the formation of both Métis nation and Canadian nation on the whole. We think thus that there could be no better way of closing this section than by completing it with Kostash's piece that creatively explores this epitome of heroic resistance.

### **ABORIGINAL LITERATURE OF RESISTANCE AND RESISTANCE ACTIVISM**

Fortunately, we can also present three papers dealing with First Nations history and culture in Canada. Literary scholar **Brygida Gasztold's** "Reclamation, Redress, and Remembrance: Aboriginal Soldiers of the Great War in Joseph Boyden's *Three Day Road*" discusses one of the most prominent and most often analyzed recent texts by an Indigenous author from Canada. In his historical novel, Joseph Boyden manages to integrate the horror evoked by the man-eating Windigo monster, so prevalent in Cree tales of the north, into the traumata experienced by two Indigenous soldiers, who as snipers in the Canadian Expeditionary Forces, are embroiled in the horrors of the senseless stationary slaughter that characterized the First World War. Gasztold explores how both Indigenous snipers are subjected to racism in the army, and how one of the two falls victim to the dehumanizing atrocities he commits, while the other takes it upon himself to stop the witchcraft, and then returns to his homeland as a maimed individual seeking atonement and mental health through Indigenous rituals provided by a female healer. The power of female healing and solidarity is also prevalent in **Lena Ruwoldt's** essay "Learning to Walk Again: Indigenous Female 'Healing Activism' in Cherie Dimaline's Short Story 'room 414' and Contemporary Activist Movements,"

where PhD-candidate Ruwoldt discusses in depth one of the episodes in Dimaline's novel/short story collection *Red Rooms*. Set in urban Canada in the skid-row milieu of substance abuse, prostitution, and multiple forms of violence in Vancouver, the maimed protagonist begins a healing journey, in which she is helped by female activists who resist further victimization of Indigenous peoples in general and Aboriginal women in particular—and here is where Ruwoldt's feminist reading integrates this literary act of resistance into the political context of Amnesty International's "Stolen Sisters" protests against the unresolved deaths/disappearances of hundreds of Aboriginal women in Canada, and the Idle No More movement resisting internal colonization today. Renewed Aboriginal resistance is also the focus of **Ina Haberman**'s contribution to our volume, exploring Eden Robinson's *Monkey Beach*. This novel is likewise set in the coastal region of British Columbia, and it integrates Indigenous Haisla/Heiltsuk traditions and environmental ethics into the protagonist's quest for her drowned brother. In her paper "drifting away in the tide": Water Symbolism and Indigenous Environmentalism in Eden Robinson's *Monkey Beach*," Haberman explores Traditional Ecological/Environmental Knowledge (TEK) conveyed in Robinson's novel and discusses it in the context of Aboriginal resistance against the looming environmental destruction entailed in the notorious Enbridge Northern Gateway Project that would transport liquefied bitumen and gas from the Alberta tar sands through Indigenous territories on the West coast, to access a Pacific route to Asia. Haberman reads the text as a form of literary resistance against ecological degradation in solidarity with First Nations activists like Jeannette Armstrong.

### ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS OF RESISTANCE

The third Aboriginal group besides Métis and First Nations, the Inuit and their language Inuktitut, are the subject of "La société québécoise et les Autochtones. La parole inuite dans le film de Benoît Pilon, *Ce qu'il faut pour vivre* (2010)," in which **Katarzyna Wójcik** discusses the status of Inuit people in Québécois society as well as their filmic representations. Wójcik observes significant changes in the images of the Inuit created in/by the cinema in the context of major shifts that have been taking place with respect to identity politics in Quebec since the 1980s. As an example, Wójcik provides an in-depth analysis of Benoît Pilon's film *Ce qu'il faut pour vivre* (2010), which gives a complex picture of the relationships and interaction between francophone and Aboriginal communities of the province throughout decades and in the present. She reads Pilon's film as a "warning against the persistence



of (neo)colonization” and as a platform for the autonomous voices of the Inuit raised in the dialogue between the communities that the film also enables.

The theme of “artistic expressions of resistance” is continued by **Krzysztof Majer**’s complex and elegantly written essay “Gold / Bernhard / Girard: A Theme and Two Variations” that combines multigenERICALLY the North American Studies scholar’s expertise in musicology, with film studies, and meticulous literary scholarship, focusing on two works reflecting the life and work of the most famous Canadian musician, Glenn Gould. At first, Majer discusses in depth *The Loser /Der Untergeher* (1983), a novel by the Austrian author Thomas Bernhard—whose works are in and of themselves acts of continued resistance to his society’s self-complacent denial of having been complicit in Nazi terror—in which Bernhard’s persona explores aspects of Gould’s personality as an “art machine.” Turning then to Quebec filmmaker François Girard’s *32 Short Films About Glenn Gould* (1993) for another enlightening take on Gould’s multifaceted public persona and musical art, Majer’s comparison concludes by seeing “Bernhard’s and Girard’s creations as both highly discursive and self-conscious: variations on a radically uncertain theme.”

## POLITICS OF RESISTANCE

Our transnational section on “Politics of Resistance” brings together three historically and thematically divergent essays on different forms of resistance, both between Canada and outside influences and within Canadian society itself.

In her essay “‘What is the cry even of the Canadians?’: Resistance towards Imperial Paternalism and US ‘Braggadocio’ in Anthony Trollope’s *North America*,” literary scholar **Barbara Ludwiczak** addresses a historical view of a very “Canadian” topic, exposing Canada’s “vulnerability” to and resistance against both British colonial domination and US-imperialist expansionism, as experienced and described by the English novelist, public servant, and “conservative Liberal” Anthony Trollope, who visited Canada as an emissary of the General Post Office at a crucial time in North American history in the early 1860s. Trollope as an “outsider” retains a British imperialist perception in favor of Canada’s independence vis-à-vis the USA, while upholding Canada’s subordinate and dependent position within the British Empire and at the same time deploring the lack of respect for aristocratic manners by the lower classes in Canada. Trollope, Ludwiczak convincingly concludes, was right in predicting a hundred fifty years ago that Canada would resist domination by the USA and eventually rule its own affairs, while paradoxically still remaining a member of the Commonwealth with the Queen as constitutional monarch. **Raymond B. Blake**, head of the Department of History at the University of Regina, who recently published his two-volume

history of Canada, *Narrating a Nation*, addresses a similarly lasting and conflict laden issue in Canadian politics, i.e. the relationship between the federal government in Ottawa and provincial autonomies. While federal systems are implemented to ensure national cohesion while checking imbalances of power between the central government and local players, they are often sites of resistance against the imposition of partisan interests. In his paper “Resistance in Canada’s Federal System and the Struggle for Political Stability, Equality, and Social Justice: The Battle for Control of Newfoundland’s Offshore Oil, 1960-1985,” Blake analyses as exemplary the struggle between Newfoundland and Ottawa over offshore oil and gas, and he shows by this example that provinces, while articulating and championing their own limited interests are ideally also engaging in processes to solve larger problems facing the nation. His paper raises pertinent questions also in terms of ecological issues and conflicts between federal governments protecting corporate interests, vis-à-vis environmental concerns at the periphery, and it celebrates the resilience of provincial governments whose resistance to, and compromises with, Ottawa strengthen democratic processes, thus supporting federalism. **Michael Keefer** is a renowned Canadian scholar of English Renaissance Literature, but the professor emeritus has frequently also raised his voice in public debates on human rights issues and against political interferences in academic freedom. In his paper “Resisting McCarthyism: From the ‘PC Wars’ to the ‘New Antisemitism,’” Keefer joins his previous experiences concerning the political and legal tactics used to discredit initial advocates of political correctness with coordinated current attempts to silence as an expression of a “new anti-Semitism” any criticism of Israeli politics in Palestine. Keefer has published three books so far on these debates as committed acts of resistance to the silencing of critical opinion (*Lunar Perspectives: Field Notes from the Culture Wars* [1998]; *Anti-Semitism: Real and Imagined* [2010]; *Hard Truths for Canada About Israel and Palestine* [2015]). We are aware that the author is treading a politically and historically highly charged terrain, but as the editors of a journal on “resistance” we are presenting Keefer’s committed documentation of this complex and controversial discussion in Canada and elsewhere to enable our readers to learn more about and reflect upon the intricacies of pc, public debates, and political ethics of resistance.

The volume on *Canadian Sites of Resistance* closes with a section that traditionally crowns the component of articles in each issue of *TransCanadiana*, being devoted to the presentation of work by young Polish Canadianists. It includes chosen excerpts of MA theses awarded by the PACS with the Nancy Burke Best M.A. Thesis Award. In 2016, the main prize was granted to **Karolina Pietrzok** for her thesis on the situation of women in twentieth-century Canada, as presented in the work of feminist filmmakers

within the NFB's Studio D. Pietrzok's Polish-language thesis, entitled "Studio D jako odbicie sytuacji kobiet w Kanadzie w XX wieku," was written under the supervision of Professor Anna Reczyńska, and it was defended at Jagiellonian University in Kraków in 2015. In the 2016 awards, two other theses received an honorable mention, namely **Malgorzata Bobowska's** "Remembering the Forgotten: The Influence of Historical Violence on the Japanese Canadian Feminine Subjects in Roy Kiyooka's *Mothertalk: Life Stories of Mary Kiyoshi Kiyooka*, Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*, *Itsuka*, and Kerri Sakamoto's *The Electrical Field, One Hundred Million Hearts*," which was supervised by Professor Agnieszka Rzepa and defended at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań; as well as **Izabela Świerkot's** Polish-language work on the political and legal system of Quebec ("Pozycja ustrojowa oraz system prawa Quebecu"), which was supervised by Professor Andrzej Dziadzio and defended at Jagiellonian University in Kraków.

We hope that the eighth issue of *TransCanadiana* will be seen by the readers as what we have aimed it to be: a collection of international and interdisciplinary perspectives of different generations of scholars who have explored ways of mounting and expressing opposition in Canada's internal context and beyond, providing an in-depth discussion of its past and present examples as well as their meanings for the future. We hope that it will open new vistas in the further study of Canadian sites of resistance enacted in solidarity for the just struggle towards a meaningful change.

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